

Connecticut Public
Request for Proposal
Community and Family Engagement Program
September 1, 2026

I General Information

Connecticut Public seeks proposals from qualified firms and/or consultants with professional expertise in community outreach, project management, event management, and connections to the education ecosystem in CT. The selected contractor will have a track record of data driven outcomes engaging educators, families and children and other stakeholders.

This RFP is specifically seeking a strategic implementation partner for the community engagement component of Connecticut Public's broader education initiative. The contractor will assist Connecticut Public in creating and implementing a community-based family engagement strategy that expands awareness and meaningful use of CT Public and PBS KIDS educational resources, strengthens relationships with families and educators, and builds sustainable connections with community partners across Connecticut. The contractor will not be responsible for media production, content acquisition, marketing, or journalism except where coordination with those activities is necessary to accomplish the community engagement work.

II Background

Connecticut Public (CT Public), provider of free, non-commercial educational programming, seeks to expand awareness and usage of its developmentally-appropriate and curriculum-aligned PBS KIDS programming and supplemental early learning resources supporting math, literacy and STEM skill development for children 2-8 years of age. Additional information about CT Public can be found on our website ctpublic.org.

Through an expanded strategic focus on education, our goal is to ensure that our trusted educational content and resources are freely accessible to all families throughout the State of Connecticut as a way to augment early learning opportunities and advance school readiness.

CT Public is focused on increasing the number of families and early childhood providers engaging with programming and educational resources available on television (CPTV/PBS KIDS) and digital platforms and through community-based learning activities. We seek to partner with community organizations, educators, and other

trusted institutions to connect with families, increase awareness, excite children and families about PBS KIDS and CT Public, and to provide guidance to educators and parents about how to use the resources to support children's learning goals.

Connecticut Public also strives to move toward sustained relationships with families, educators, and community partners. As a statewide organization, our long-term aim is to create a community-based ecosystem throughout Connecticut connecting families and educators with Connecticut Public and PBS KIDS through learning experiences, resources, events, and professional learning.

Prior Learning and Norwalk Pilot

Connecticut Public began testing this community-based family engagement approach through a pilot in Norwalk, Connecticut. The pilot followed a "listen first" strategy designed to learn directly from families before developing future programming. Activities included introducing families to a PBS KIDS program and sharing the educational components that advance early literacy, math and STEM skills. A Family Festival was held to introduce families to PBS KIDS resources and activities. Through parent focus groups and a community share-out, the pilot generated meaningful feedback as CT Public seeks to expand this approach statewide. Key learnings included: the importance of bilingual outreach and interpretation, availability of childcare supports when hosting events, participation from local leaders to connect with the community, and the use of PBS KIDS characters and personalities as engagement tools.

The pilot identified opportunities for improvement and growth including the need for ongoing communication with participating families, greater parent voice, increased participation by early childhood providers and educators, professional development opportunities, and the importance of connecting with early childhood councils. These learnings inform the work contemplated in this RFP.

Implementation Statewide

Building on the pilot, Connecticut Public seeks to translate pilot learnings into a scalable statewide family engagement strategy that can be implemented in communities / regions across Connecticut. We understand that it may take several years for full implementation as we build partnerships throughout the state. This RFP is for a two-year planning and implementation period and is seen as a first phase of this statewide growth. As an initial step, we have identified three regions of focus:

- New Haven County including Waterbury
- Hartford County
- New London County

Many of these communities have large Latino populations and CT Public is committed to understanding the unique needs of Latino families and creating and/or providing bilingual learning resources.

III Proposed Activities

Connecticut Public is expanding its educational programming for early learners. This broader educational initiative has several components including the acquisition and production of children's educational programming for television and digital platforms, the creation of partnerships throughout the state with organizations that support young learners and their families, and extensive outreach strategies to reach families and educators to introduce them to CT Public/PBS KIDS resources. An overview of the components of this initiative can be found in Exhibit A.

This RFP seeks a contractor to support Community and Family Engagement Program Design and Implementation.

Proposers are asked to provide a scope of work to respond to the proposed activities noted below which are designed to advance CT Public's effort to develop deep and productive collaborations with community partners who work with families and children including:

Discovery and Partnership Development:

- working with Connecticut Public staff create and implement a family engagement model that can be adapted across diverse Connecticut communities
- identify and cultivate relationships with trusted partners such as early childhood programs, schools, libraries, community organizations, cultural and language-specific networks, and other organizations serving families
- host and support community events and provide opportunities for parent feedback that raise awareness of CT Public's educational resources and demonstrate ways families can use them to support children's learning
- participate in community programs hosted by trusted providers

Family and Educator Engagement:

- expand educator outreach and assess / implement opportunities for professional development connected to PBS KIDS resources, school readiness, early learning and family engagement connecting to Connecticut state standards for early learners (ages 2-8).
- help design parent advisory, family leadership, and/or community ambassador approaches for authentic and ongoing engagement

- solicit and incorporate parent feedback through surveys, focus groups, events, advisory structures, and other opportunities for authentic family voice
- coordinate with Connecticut Public community engagement staff to align efforts and help build capacity to sustain local relationships
- distribute Curiosity Kits and other educational materials at events and through community partners, as appropriate
- develop pathways for families to move from initial participation toward ongoing engagement with Connecticut Public and PBS KIDS

Measurement:

- recommend success metrics, feedback systems, and approaches for ongoing learning and improvement given the allotted budget

Capacity Building:

- develop a practical implementation and scaling roadmap for continued work beyond the initial grant period

IV Geographic Scope: As noted, as a first step in Connecticut Public's goal to implement community and family engagement efforts throughout the state, we have identified three regions of focus:

- New Haven County including Waterbury
- Hartford County
- New London County

Proposers should articulate the approach they will take to reach these three regions which could include (a) implementation plans for at least two of these three regions over the two years of the grant period or (b) recommendations and a road map to scale the approach to reach all regions over multiple years and beyond the grant period.

V Expected Contractor Deliverables

Over the two-year grant period, the contractor will engage in planning and capacity building as well as implementation activities. It is expected that contractors will (1) structure the community and family engagement framework and plan reflecting the activities noted above (2) deploy a hands-on approach to implement the plan bringing expertise, relationships, and strategic perspective while working closely with Connecticut Public staff (3) engage in a partnership model with CT Public staff vs operating as a stand-alone program provider to ensure alignment across the entire

education plan and to build organizational capacity for ongoing community and family engagement.

Planning and Capacity Building efforts will provide frameworks and/or roadmaps that articulate goals and strategies for CT Public's expanded community and family engagement strategy while also building internal capacity with the following deliverables:

- A Community Partnership Plan including:
 - recommendations for engaging with the communities / regions identified in this RFP, programs and strategies for adapting engagement activities to different local contexts.
 - Outreach and implementation strategies identifying priority relationships, communities, milestones, roles, and timing.
- A Family Engagement Framework describing how Connecticut Public can move families from awareness and initial participation to sustained engagement including:
 - Recommendations and implementation support for parent voice, parent advisory, and family leadership structures.
- An Educator Engagement Strategy including recommendations regarding professional development and a sustainable delivery/cost model. As noted below, scope of work to include 1-3 professional development events in the chosen regions.
- A measurement and continuous-learning framework, including recommended indicators and mechanisms for family, educator, and partner feedback.
- A final two- to three-year implementation roadmap incorporating learning from the contract period with recommendations for sustainability, funding, partnerships, and future statewide scaling.

Community Implementation is focused on furthering the work identified in the Norwalk pilot in other communities / regions and to execute on CT Public's goal to reach more families and educators and increase awareness of CT Public's / PBS KIDS educational resources. Key deliverables include:

- Implementation of the Community Partnership Plan and Family Engagement Framework including but not limited to:
 - outreach strategies
 - development of local partnerships
 - community and family engagement events including opportunities for parent voice and engagement.
- Host 1-3 professional development sessions in chosen regions connecting to Connecticut state standards for early learners (ages 2-8). In addition, as funds allow,

host other educator outreach and engagement activities to increase awareness and usage of CT Public/PBS KIDS resources.

VI Timeline:

The project is supported by federal grant funding through the U.S. Department of Education and anticipated for a two-year contract period. Proposers should recommend a work plan that supports early implementation, continuous learning and adjustment, and development of a sustainable approach beyond the initial grant period.

Contract period: Estimated to start one month after award for a two-year period

- **RFP posted on Tuesday, September 1, 2026**
- **RFP Proposal Conference: Wednesday, September 9, 2026 at 1:30pm via ZOOM: <https://ctpublic.zoom.us/j/4958941153>**
- **Questions for the purpose of clarifying the RFP:** must be submitted in writing via email to SPasquantonio@ctpublic.org no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 11, 2026
- **Questions from the Proposal Conference and/or by email will be answered and posted on the website by September 16, 2026**
- **Submission deadline: Thursday, October 1, 2026, 5:00pm**
No late submissions will be accepted
- **Projected Award Announcement: Monday, November 2, 2026**

VII Evaluation Factors

Minimum Qualifications

- A. A minimum of five (5) years of experience advising organizations on the development and implementation of family engagement strategies.
- B. A minimum of five (5) years of experience facilitating events and activities with small, medium and large groups and building relationships with families and community partners.
- C. Knowledge of Connecticut's early childhood, education, and community ecosystem and demonstrated relationships with trusted community organizations.
- D. Demonstrated experience using data, feedback, and reporting to inform implementation and outcomes.
- E. Demonstrated experience translating strategy into implementation.

The following qualifications are highly desired:

- A. Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to develop strong written and analytic documents.

- B. Experience working with non-profit and/or media organizations that are complex at various stages in strategic plan development.
- C. Ability and experience in observing interpersonal dynamics, facilitating inclusive processes, and ensuring diverse voices are at the table.
- D. Experience with culturally and linguistically responsive family outreach and engagement.
- E. Experience developing parent leadership, advisory, community ambassador, and/or educator engagement models.
- F. Experience working across multiple communities or regions and adapting approaches to local context.

Scoring Rubric

Scope & Technical Fit (30%): Quality of the proposed education and family engagement approach, alignment with project goals, clarity of deliverables, methodology, and ability to connect strategy with implementation.

Experience & Relationships (25%): Past work with similar projects or educational/community organizations, relevant Connecticut ecosystem knowledge and relationships, experience in culturally and linguistically responsive engagement; track record of success, and reference checks.

Implementation Plan (20%): Realistic timelines, staff allocations, outreach approach, project management, coordination with Connecticut Public staff, and capacity to implement across communities.

Cost Proposal (15%): Total cost, value for money, transparency of fee structures, and avoidance of hidden costs.

Measurement, Sustainability & Responsiveness (10%): Approach to data and learning, sustainability and scaling, and adherence to mandatory proposal requirements.

VIII Submission Guidelines

Your proposal should be no more than 20 pages in total and no less than 8, not including addendums such as staff resumes and references.

The proposal must include the following:

A. Scope of Experience.

The Proposer should describe experience related to the areas outlined in the RFP above, in English. Additionally, if applicable, provide a description of experience advising organizations comparable to CT Public that offer similar programs and services. Proposers should identify experience with family engagement, early childhood or education, community outreach, partnership development, implementation, and data-informed improvement.

B. Proposed Approach and Implementation Plan.

Describe the proposed approach to outreach and guidance; creation and implementation of the family and community engagement strategy; relationship development with families, educators, and trusted partners; parent voice; educator engagement; measurement; sustainability; and statewide scaling. Include a proposed two-year timeline, milestones, deliverables, staffing approach, and description of how the proposer will work with Connecticut Public staff.

C. Organization, Size, Structure, and Areas of Practice.

The Proposer should describe its organization in terms of the following:

1. Size
2. Structure
3. Areas of expertise, practice, or consultancy, in terms of length of existence, types of services, provided etc. Identify the technical credentials that make the firm and/or consultant uniquely qualified for this work.
4. Identify only the individuals who will do the work on this project by name and title and describe how each will be key to successful completion. Please include resumes and qualifications for all proposed project personnel.
5. Office location(s)
6. State of being a small or minority-owned business
7. Provide a copy of Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action policy, if available.

D. Cost Proposal.

This is a grant-funded project with federal funds provided through the U.S. Department of Education. The total allocation for the work identified in this RFP is \$129,600 over two years with progress payments made based on identified key milestones.

Cost proposals should be all inclusive and not to exceed the total noted above.

Cost proposals should be detailed including professional fees as well as expenses that support the implementation strategies the proposal recommends such as: community / family events, professional development sessions, other engagement strategies and any other costs to be covered by the fee structure noted below. Please include assumptions or explanations of all expenses. Identify any services or expenses that are not included in the proposed fee.

CT Public will manage the procurement of supplies for “Curiosity Kits” including items like books, coloring sheets, pencils for distribution at community events.

E. References.

Provide at least three references for comparable engagements, including organization, contact person, contact information, nature of the work performed, and dates of service.

Your proposal should be emailed as a PDF attachment, to the individual and email listed below, functioning as the RFP Coordinator:

Request for Proposal

Thursday, October 1, 2026, 5:00pm.

Sonja Pasquantonio

Director of Human Resources

emailto:SPasquantonio@ctpublic.org

Attachments to e-mail shall be in PDF. The cover submittal letter must include the Certifications and Assurances in Exhibit B including a scanned signature of the individual within the organization authorized to bind the Consultant to the offer. CT Public does not assume responsibility for problems with Consultant’s e-mail.

Failure to follow procedures may result in premature disqualification of your proposal. It is the responsibility of the Proposer to ensure that the proposal is received by CT Public by the date, time and in the manner specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

Please review Exhibit C for General Information regarding this RFP.

Proposal submission closing date

Thursday, October 1, 2026, 5:00pm

No late submissions accepted.

Exhibit A:

Connecticut Public: Expanding Educational Programming for Early Learners

Connecticut Public is expanding its educational programming for early learners. This broader educational initiative has several components including the acquisition and production of children's educational programming for television and digital platforms, the creation of partnerships throughout the state with organizations that support young learners and their families and extensive outreach strategies to reach families and educators to introduce them to CT Public/PBS KIDS resources. An overview of the components of this initiative can be found in Exhibit A. This RFP seeks a contractor to support Community Engagement Strategies (#4).

Connecticut Public's Educational Initiative includes:

1. Expanding educational programming for children and their families by:

(a) developing an educational content plan for children ages 2-8 that supports literacy, math and STEM skill development

(b) securing and/or acquiring high-quality, curriculum-aligned children's programming for television and digital including bilingual options for access for all families

(c) partnering with educators and community organizations to reach and engage with families

(d) implementing a distribution plan to share educational content across platforms such as our PBS KIDS 24/7 (CPTV) television channel, website, and Connecticut Public + app.

2. Developing new content for children and families including

(a) producing a new standards-aligned bilingual video series that builds early literacy and supports foundational learning skills through English and Spanish content. The program is designed to engage children ages 2-4 and caregivers, including bilingual families and those seeking dual-language learning opportunities for children

(b) creating informational materials such as a Learning Snacks newsletter, a collection of multi-media educational resources designed to enhance learning at home

(c) producing family-oriented resources such as webpages, interstitials, community calendars, and other information helpful for all families.

(d) As a trusted public media resource, we also engage two community journalists to produce useful local information on issues affecting families and community life

including topics to help connect residents to resources that support family well-being and early childhood development.

3. Outreach to families, educators and community members to increase awareness and encourage usage of the resources by

(a) developing a multilevel awareness plan to reach families including use of audio, video, digital, and community signage with bilingual options for full access

(b) ongoing communications to share new programming and content and inspire engagement with the learning resources

(c) building a social media presence to boost engagement and introduce families to expanded children's programming.

4. Community engagement strategies to develop deep and productive collaborations with community partners who work with families and children by

- working with Connecticut Public to create and implement a family engagement model that can be adapted across diverse Connecticut communities
- identifying and cultivating relationships with trusted partners, including early childhood programs, schools, libraries, community organizations, cultural and language-specific networks, and other organizations serving families
- hosting and supporting community events that raise awareness of educational resources and demonstrate ways families can use them to support children's learning
- participating in community programs hosted by trusted providers
- soliciting and incorporating parent feedback through surveys, focus groups, events, advisory structures, and other opportunities for authentic family voice
- developing pathways for families to move from initial participation toward ongoing engagement with Connecticut Public and PBS KIDS
- expanding educator outreach and assessing opportunities for professional development connected to PBS KIDS resources, school readiness, early learning standards, and family engagement
- helping design parent advisory, family leadership, and/or community ambassador approaches
- coordinating with Connecticut Public community engagement staff and helping build their capacity to sustain local relationships
- distributing Curiosity Kits and other educational materials at events and through community partners, as appropriate
- recommending success metrics, feedback systems, and approaches for ongoing learning and improvement

- developing a practical implementation and scaling roadmap for continued work beyond the initial grant period

Activities listed in item #4 are the focus of the scope of work for this RFP. The selected contractor's primary role will be outreach and guidance, coupled with hands-on support to create and implement the engagement approach in partnership with Connecticut Public. The contractor is expected to bring expertise, relationships, and strategic perspective while working closely with Connecticut Public staff rather than operating as a stand-alone program provider.

Exhibit B

CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

I/we make the following certifications and assurances as a required element of the proposal to which it is attached, understanding that the truthfulness of the facts affirmed here and the continuing compliance with these requirements are conditions precedent to the award or continuation of the related contract:

1. I/we declare that all answers and statements made in the proposal are true and correct.
2. The prices and/or cost data have been determined independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with others for the purpose of restricting competition. However, I/we may freely join with other persons or organizations for the purpose of presenting a single proposal.
3. The attached proposal is a firm offer for a period of 30 days following receipt, and it may be accepted by CT Public without further negotiation (except where obviously required by lack of certainty in key terms) at any time within the 30-day period.
4. I/we understand that CT Public will not reimburse me/us for any costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal. All proposals become the property of CT Public, and I/we claim no proprietary right to the ideas, writings, items, or samples, unless so stated in this proposal.
5. Unless otherwise required by law, the prices and/or cost data which have been submitted have not been knowingly disclosed by the Proposer and will not be knowingly disclosed by him/her prior to opening, directly or indirectly, to any other Proposer or to any competitor.
6. I/we agree that submission of the attached proposal constitutes acceptance of the solicitation contents and the attached sample contract and general terms and conditions. If there are any exceptions to these terms, I/we have described those *exceptions in detail on a page attached to this document.
7. No attempt has been made or will be made by the Proposer to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition.
8. I/we grant CT Public the right to contact references and others who may have pertinent information regarding the ability of the Consultant and the lead staff person to perform the services contemplated by this RFP.



On behalf of the Consultant submitting this proposal, my signature below attests to the accuracy of the above statement as well as my authority to bind the submitting organization.

Signature of Proposer

Date

Printed Name

Title

Exhibit C

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Contract Award. CT Public reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Consultant can propose. There will be no best and final offer procedure. CT Public reserves the right to contact a Consultant for clarification of its proposal.

B. Stability of Proposed Prices and Contract General Terms and Conditions. Any price offerings from Proposers must be valid for a period of 30 days from the due date of the proposal. The apparent successful contractor will be expected to enter into a contract which is substantially the same as the Company's contract and its general terms and conditions. In no event is a Consultant to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions in response to this solicitation.

C. Amendment or Cancellation of the RFP. CT Public reserves the right to cancel, amend, modify, or otherwise change this RFP at any time if it deems it to be in the best interests of CT Public.

D. Proposal Modifications. No additions or changes to any proposal will be allowed after the proposal due date, unless such modification is specifically requested. CT Public, at its option, may seek Proposer retraction and clarification of any discrepancy or contradiction found during its review of proposals.

E. Proposer Presentation of Supporting Evidence. Proposers must be prepared to provide any evidence of experience, performance, ability that CT Public deems necessary or appropriate to fully establish the performance capabilities represented in their proposals.

F. Proposer Demonstration of Proposed Services and/or Products. Proposers must be able to confirm their ability to provide all proposed services.

G. Certifications and Assurances. Before final agreement and contracting, proposers must provide certifications and assurances documenting mandatory regulatory provisions such as anti-lobbying and ethics, conflict of interest, nondiscrimination and other state and federal requirements.

H. Erroneous Awards. CT Public reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards. This includes revoking the awarding of a contract to a Proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to a different Proposer. Such action shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of CT Public because the contract with the initial Proposer will be deemed voided as if no contract were ever in place.

I. Ownership of Proposals and Costs to Propose. All proposals and accompanying document shall become the property of CT Public and will not be returned. CT Public is not liable for any costs incurred by the Consultant in preparation of a proposal submitted in response to this RFP, travel to or conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related to responding to this RFP.

J. Ownership of Subsequent Products. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of CT Public unless otherwise stated in the contract.

K. Oral Agreement or Arrangements. Any alleged oral agreements or arrangements made by Proposers with CT Public will be disregarded in any proposal evaluation or associated award.

L. Not a Contract. This RFP is not a contract and, alone, shall not be interpreted as such. Rather, this RFP serves only as the instrument through which proposals are solicited. If, for some reason, CT Public and the initial Proposer fail to reach consensus on the issues relative to a contract, then CT Public may commence contract negotiations with other Proposers. CT Public may decide at any time to start the RFP process again. The selected Proposer will be required to sign a formal contract.

M. Subcontractors. CT Public must approve any and all subcontractors utilized by the successful Proposer prior to any such subcontractor commencing any work. Proposers acknowledge by the act of submitting a proposal that any work provided under the contract is work conducted on behalf of CT Public and that the CT Public President and CEO or designee may communicate directly with any subcontractor as CT Public deems necessary or appropriate.

N. Payment of Fees. It is also understood that the successful Proposer shall be responsible for all payment of fees charged by the subcontractor(s). A performance evaluation of any subcontractor shall be provided promptly by the successful Proposer to CT Public upon request. The successful Proposer must provide the majority of services described in the specifications.

O. ADA. CT Public complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Consultants may contact Sonja Pasquantonio to receive this Request for Proposals in Braille or on tape.

Q. The selected respondent will be required to provide CT Public an IRS form W-9.